Numb. 7.

Heraclitus Ridens:

AT

A Dialogue between Jeſt and Earneſt, concerning the Times.

Tueſday, March 15. 1681.

Jeſt. WHAT, *Mercurius Melancholi-cus?* what's the matter, man, in a brown ſtudy?

Earn. No I aſſure you, it is a very black one.

Jeſt. I'le lay forty to one, it is about 41 or 48.

Earn. No Sir, there's your miſtake, it is 81. but in truth they look ſo like, that a wiſer man than you may eaſily miſtake.

Jeſt. You are always like a Cuckoo ſinging one Note.

Earn. And your Brains ſtill crow with the froth of the Bottle-Air you drunk at the Wedding: but pray oblige me with a minutes patience, and help me to reconcile a few *Diſſenting*-thoughts.

Jeſt. Nay, if you be for Uniting *Proteſtant-Diſſenting*-thoughts, there I am for you, a match quoth *Scoggin*, when he never meant it.

Earn. This is juſt like your Couſin *Jocular*, who calls himſelf *Mercurius Bifrons*, one of whoſe faces wants Wit, and the other Honeſty.

Jeſt. Pray let my Kindred alone, and come to the point, to the point; I long to ſhew my skill in Uniting, I can do it if it were a Rope of Sand.

Earn. If your skill falls a grain ſhorter, you'l find the thing impoſſible.

Jeſt. Impoſſible! that ſame *Impoſſible* is one of the ſilliest fellows in the Town; he's a Tory, I am ſure and a Maſquerader. I heard the Rogue ſo run down the other day at *Richard*'s Coffee-houſe, for affirming that Popery could never come into *England*, unleſs the Phanatiques let it in at the back door of Toleration, that he lookt like a Church of *England-man* maintaining the neceſſity of the words *As by Law now Eſtabliſhed*, which you know is Tantivyiſm and Toryiſm in the higheſt degree.

Earn. Very fine! a man is then to be meaſured a true Proteſtant in Proportion to his diſlike of the Government as it is now *by Law eſtabliſhed* in the Church, and this is plain downright Popery. Pray good Mr. *Joyner*, how will you glew theſe two together?

Jeſt. As eaſie as kiſs my hand: Why look ye. your *true Proteſtant-Diſſenter*, is, as Mr. *Smith* has well hinted, *Prot. Merc. nu.* 10. only againſt your 26 old Non-content Gentlemen, and the Common-Prayer.

Earn. And that is as rank and arrant Popery as the other. I can ſhew you the Popes Excommunication againſt all the Biſhops in *England*, and all that ſhould go to hear or ſay Common-Prayers in Q. *Elizabeths* days.

Jeſt. Ay marry Sir, your Q. *Elizabeths*-Proteſtants were a company of very pretty fellows, they made the damn'd *Act of Abjuring*, to reſtrain the Queens godly Subjects in their due obedience; as if it were fit people ſhould by Laws be reſtrained from the Liberty of Conſcience and of the Subject, to Rebel upon occaſion; and were not theſe fine true Proteſtants think you? Come Sir I muſt inſtruct, you I find, pray read Mr. *Weekly Diſſenterer ſtript naked*, and you ſhall ſee how he whips your Queen *Beſſes* par-boild Proteſtants about the Pig-market with a Cat with nine Tails, for he hath juſt ſo many Queries before the Devil and the Pope enter into him. Qu. 6. ſaith he, *Whether it be not very unreaſonable to brand all thoſe who do not contents themſelves with a half-Reformation with the name of Schiſmaticks?* Look you now Sir, you ſee who are the true Proteſtants, they who are for the thorow Reformation; for extirpating Popery, *i. e.* Epiſcopacy, Root and Branch, according to the late *Solemn League and Covenant*.

Earn. Worſe and Worſe! this is the very quinteſſence of Jeſuitiſm why Sir, by the confeſſion of Diſſenters, the late Rebellion and thorow Reformation, and the murder of the King were all contrived and carried on by Popiſh Counſels; and if you do not leave them this hole to creep out at, they will be quite undone, it is all the excuſe they can poſſibly have to call themſelves Fools and Puppets, who dance upon Jeſuitical Wires; for otherwiſe they muſt confeſs themſelves the blackeſt Villains that ever vengeance ſuffered to live.

Jeſt. But do you think they will be ſuch Fools to be be-Jeſuited again?

Earn. There it is that the Shoe pinches, for my life I cannot underſtand *F. Smiths* Zeal in publiſhing ſo many Adreſſes for taking away the Corporation-Act, and the Kings Guards, which he ſays the Law knows not. Sure he does either not know or not fear the Law himſelf.

Jeſt. Oh 'tis a damn'd cunning Rogue, he will ſtur you an Addreſs of the Free-holders upon the Nation, when if you inquire of the matter, not one of thoſe who were there know or heard of any ſuch thing (as for example, that neat one of the Election at *Hampſtead-Heath* juſt under our Noſes;) or if ſuch a thing be, their conſent was never askt till they hear it read, and then half a ſcore bawling Sciſmaticks cry Ay, Ay, as if they had ſwallowed Sr. *S. Morland*'s Trumpet; and this goes for the conſent of all the Free-holders. This makes the party look great and formidable, and then comes in the ſting of *Lives and Fortunes* in the Tail; which looks like the ſecond part to the ſame Tune of *Living and Dying with his Excellency the Earl of Eſſex in* 1642.

Earn. This I confeſs, is politique; but it does not give me ſatisfaction as to the Corporation-Act.

Jeſt. I will give you ſatisfaction if you be ſatisfiable; look you here is part of the Preamble of that Act; and *Coke* upon *Littleton*, Fol. 79. *a.* ſays

it down for a Rule to understand the meaning of Acts of Parliament by. *And whereas divers other persons not ordained according to the Doctrine of the Church of* England, *have since the Act of Oblivion taken upon them to preach*, (and administer Sacraments too) *in unlawful Assemblies, Conventicles, or meetings under colour or pretence of exercise of Religion and contrary to the Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom have setled themselves in divers Corporations in* England, *sometimes three or more of them in a place, thereby taking an opportunity to distil the poisonous principles of Schism and Rebellion into the hearts of his Majesties Subjects to the great danger of the Church and Kingdom. Be it therefore, &c.* D' ye see Sir, this Act is directly made in favour of the Tory and Tantivy party: and Mr. *Smith*, &c. having a great quantity of true Protestant Mercury by him, does not know how to get off his prohibited goods, without a licence to distil the poisonous principles of Schism and Rebellion into the hearts of his Majesties Subjects; and I dare swear he means no more harm than a sucking Devil of a year old. *Earnest.* You have Tinker'd very fairly, and to stop one hole made twenty. All this I knew before, but this is so far from giving me satisfaction that it has increased my doubts: for if the Government, as it is now by Law established, looks upon the principles of these people as poisonous and Rebellious, they render themselves ten times more suspicious in endeavouring to have those Laws abrogated, which are the Fences of the Government; and to me it looks like a Thiefs endeavouring to break the prison, who thereby implies a Guilt which before was but a bare Suspicion. If they be guilty of such practices, no Laws can be too severe against them; and if they be not guilty, why do they complain? the Law is made for the disobedient. But to be short, pray answer me these important Queres, which I will leave to your consideration, and I think they may deserve it.

1. Whether the Fable in *Esop* of the Wolves perswading the Sheep to disband their Guards, and undertaking to supply their Office, together with the Event of that agreement, have any Moral?

2. Whether an unruly Horse that kicks and flings, champs the bit between his Teeth. and does all he can to break the curb, hath not a design to break his Riders neck if he can; or however to set him out of the Saddle?

3. Whether promising to *assist* any persons whatsoever *with life and fortune*, without the express consent of His Majesty first had and obtained, be not a constructive *levying War* against his Royal Authority, within the meaning of the Act for *setling the whole and intire power of the Militia in His Majesty?* And whether *Smith* and *Harris* have done the Free-holders of *Suffolk*, *Essex*, and *Middlesex* Justice, in Printing and Publishing what may touch both their Free and Copy-hold.

4. Whether he who cries out, *Look before you leap*, or he who cries *Drive on Carman*, is more tender of the bone that is so hard to set?

5. Whether they were true Protestant Anabaptist Troopers, who in defiance of all Religion, pissed in the Font, and sprinkled one of their Horses, giving him the name of *Ball-Esau*, because he had a White face and was hairy? whether such pranks do not recommend them to the favour of Toleration, for the Reputation they have done the late thorow Reformation; and whether ever after *Ball-Esau* was not a true Protestant Anabaptist-Horse and fit to settle in a Corporation, as well as any Horse or Ass in *England*.

6. Whether if according to *Harris*'s *Essex*-Address, *Prot Dom. Int. Nu.* 100. the Fleet and Garrisons were setled in the hands of such persons as are of known Loyalty and Fidelity to the King and Kingdom, the Anabaptists would not hope to come in for a snip with their *Munster*-Loyalty? and whether it be not a branch of *Fitz-Harris*'s Plot to indeavour to persuade the people that His Majesty trusts such as are not fit to be trusted, and to do the business of *France* by setting the *English* together by the Ears?

7. Whether if *Smith*, *Harris* and their Friends were of his Majesties Privy Council, they would leave the King ever a true Loyal Friend either about his person or in any place of trust and power in the three Kingdoms? and what his Majesty must then trust to if the Fox were his Caterer?

Jest. Enough, enough, Good Mr. *Earnest*, knock, sweet Mr. *Earnest* knock, as the word is in *Bridewell*: I'le compound with you for this time, and present you a sober Pindaric Ode, which has made me go all on one side it is so heavy in my Pocket.

Earnest reads. The Retrospection, a Pindaric Ode.

Ah Stubborn Isle!
So late from slavish bondage freed,
(of Civil Wars the precious meed;)
Canst thou so soon forget the Toyl,
the Cruel and Imperious Law,
Exacting Brick, and yet denying Straw?
Or the fam'd Cheats of State Magicians,
Religious Polititians
their Rods to Serpents turn'd by slight
that hiss'd and stung,
while the amazed throng
in vain attempted to escape by flight,
and how those guilded Serpents Pow'r
did even Moses sacred Rod devour.

2

Then every River and every Flood
was turned into blood,
the Frogs of Jealousies and Fears
croak'd dangers in our Ears.
Then swarms of Lice, and guilded Flies,
Sects, and Schisms and Heresies
in numerous throngs came in
and turn'd our Prayers into sin.
A grievous Murrain followed next
which through the Nation flew
and Men like Beasts it slew.
Biles and blains the State perplext,
Rebellions rancorous sores
Broke and discharg'd their long hid putrid stores.

3

A dismal plague of Iron hail,
and leaden Rain
with dreadful fire and thunder mingled fell,
a fire that came from Hell.
Religion and true Loyalty were slain
whilest Rebels did prevail
and Albion *look'd like* Sodoms *smoaking Plain.*
Locust Committees next bore sway
and what the Hail had left they swept away
and sorrow darkned every beam of day.
But oh! the Plague of Plagues was still behind
the Purple first-born of the Throne
(What can his blood atone!)
by those destroying Angels first confin'd,
and then with Pompous state
the impudent formality
of treacherous Disloyalty,
Was crown'd a Martyr at his Royal Gate.

ADVERTISEMENT.

There will be shortly published a Parallel of Popish and Schismatical cruelties, and what we may expect from a Commonwealth of Saints acted by Popish Counsels and Principles, lively represented in plates of the same mettal with Olivers *Nose and* F. Smiths *Forehead.*

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